

The **Islamic Review**

Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

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 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلُهُ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى سُبُلِ الْكَيْمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

MUHARRAM 1348 A.H.

VOL. XVII.

JUNE, 1929 A.C.

No. 6

EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

By GUSTAV DIERCKS, PH.D.

(Continued from April-May (1929), "Islamic Review," p. 172.)

THE CALIPHATE AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

The death of Muhammad seemed, at first, to destroy all that he had accomplished; for no sooner had the news spread amongst the Bedouins than they shook off the uncomfortable yoke which had curtailed their hitherto unbridled freedom, and the infant kingdom which had only just come into existence was resolved once again into the component parts of which it had been welded with such pains and pertinacity. Various parties sprang up in Arabia, and amongst the Muslims themselves there were dissensions and discords, every faction pursuing its own interests exclusively, so that a reunification of the scattered elements was possible by no means other than those of violence—and who should adopt such a course as this? Muhammad had not thought of designating a successor, who after his death should assume the reins of government. His followers had not reckoned with the possibility of the Prophet himself being mortal even as they. His death took them completely by surprise, and even the energetic 'Omar could not, at first, bring himself to believe that it had actually happened.

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Perhaps Muhammad had of set purpose refrained from giving any regulations as to what should or should not take place after his death, or who should assume the leadership of the Muslims, because he did not want to touch a question which obviously might be the cause of differences amongst the more ambitious of his disciples and friends, who might thus too readily jeopardize the cause of Islam and destroy the work long before it was completed. Therefore he left it to them to agree among themselves after his death on the question and form of his successorship, relying on the tried zeal and fidelity of those who had stood by him with their advice and had supported him in his resolutions. Amongst these, Abū Bakr's name is of special note. He is the father of the Prophet's beloved wife 'Ā'isha, to whose (Abū Bakr's) advice and judgment the Prophet attached great weight. Abū Bakr represented and officiated for the Prophet in the last hours of his life at the prayers in the Mosque when, at the house of 'Ā'isha and in her arms, Muhammad breathed his last. Owing to all these circumstances, and especially in view of the fact that Abū Bakr was the oldest of all those who had migrated to Medina, the eyes of Muslims were turned to him when it came to the election of a caliph, a successor and representative of the Prophet, a leader of the prayers in the Mosque, and head of the State or society. But the beloved of Muhammad was 'Alī, his son-in-law, the husband of Fātima, and he also had a numerous following. In addition to these two parties, into which the immediate disciples of the deceased had divided themselves, there were many others amongst the former emigrants who claimed for themselves the honour of providing a caliph. There were the men of Medina who were striving hard after the reins of government; there were the Ansārs (the helpers), to whom to a great extent was due the recognition that Islam had acquired. Amongst the Medinites there were again two parties sharply opposed to each other—the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, each one of whom put forward its own candidate. The struggle as to who should succeed the Prophet was assuming portentous and fateful proportions when it was suddenly ended by 'Omar's abrupt decision in favour

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of Abū Bakr as caliph. The resultant accession to power of the Meccan and political parties proved a singularly favourable turning-point in the progress of Islam; for although Abū Bakr and 'Omar were as much orthodox as 'Alī was, yet they supplied all that was lacking in the case of the mystical idealist 'Alī, and which was primarily most essential if the kingdom which was heading straight for disruption was to be saved and properly organized; for theirs was a policy aiming at practical ends and borne onward by uncompromising will-power. Abū Bakr proved himself fully equal to the difficult circumstances in which he entered upon the caliphate. With true Arabian tenacity and energy he pursued his aims, which he once and for all had recognized as right and truthful, and demonstrated in the austerity of his career that he possessed the ruler's instinct in a supreme degree, in which true leniency and forbearance were most happily mated with an inexorable strictness. Only through the application of this last-named quality could he, for example, hope to regain the Bedouin tribes which had fallen away, and compel them to acknowledge his sovereignty. He fought them courageously and relentlessly, refusing—against the counsels of his advisers—to make any concessions at all, for thus alone, he believed, could they be subjugated. And, as a matter of fact, it was by these methods that he did succeed in uniting them, within a short period and for ever, into one nation as far as the outer world was concerned.

Moreover, Abū Bakr followed in the strictest manner the words of the Prophet and strove earnestly to become his real follower and true successor. It was he who gave effect to all such plans of Muhammad as had been frustrated or suspended by his death. Muhammad, for instance, wanted to undertake an expedition against the Byzantines, and also against the Syrians. Therefore the first thing which Abū Bakr did—in spite of the fact that his hands were already overfull with the subjugations of the Arabs, and that he had at his disposal a very inadequate army, with consequently a very faint prospect of success—was to march against them. The victorious result of this war in no small measure enhanced the prestige of Islam,

not only throughout the whole of Arabia, but also in all countries round about.

The political institutions of Abū Bakr and 'Omar, and indeed of the first four caliphs in general, which had been introduced under these circumstances, were taken to have become decisive for all time, and under the first two caliphs there developed a peculiar socialistic State constitution which has no parallel in the history of the world.

The founding of Islam had nothing whatever to do with material gains and worldly success; and as soon as the Arabs recognized that they henceforward could expect from Islam, not only its protection, but also diverse palpable advantages; as soon as they understood that the principle laid down by Muhammad, which propounded equality of rights among all the Arabian Muslims and a share of each of one of them in all that accrued from the expeditions—was recognized and observed, the Bedouins flocked in large numbers to the armies of the caliphs. From the beginning, therefore, it was not only the fanaticism with which the Arabs, according to their nature, espoused the cause of the national belief, but principally also the judicious apportionment of the moneys of the State, the prospects of material advantages, and, later on, the preference of the Arabs to all the Muslims of other nationalities, which enabled the proportionately small armies of Arabia to achieve successes which stand out so conspicuously in the history of the world. For this reason it was an extraordinary political step of Abū Bakr and 'Omar to permit the regulations of Muhammad to stand in respect of the division of the moneys of the State, and to found on them the system of taxation and finance which we find in operation in the history of the caliphs.

Muhammad had ordained that four-fifths of the war booty was to be divided amongst the warriors, the remaining one-fifth going to the State treasury. This law was preserved, and later on extended, so that the Muslims—apart from insignificant disbursements, such as taxes on money and merchandise—had to pay to the State $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. poor-rate and property-tax and 10 per cent. land-tax. But in recompense for that, besides their share in the four-fifths of the war booty, every

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one of them had a fixed yearly income. The yield of the so-called poor-rate, which was a duty on those only who had the means to pay it, was used for the support of the poor, the orphans, and the needy. Islam has, above all else, enjoined charity upon every Muslim, and this injunction, be it remembered, was, and is, followed in a fashion wellnigh extravagant. Annual endowments were given originally to the surviving wives and the nearest relations of the Prophet, and after that to the Muslims of both the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. Later they were extended to all the real Arabian Muslims. A most careful register of all the Arabian tribes was maintained, and special offices were erected for this purpose, so that the income of the State might be divided in a just manner, in accordance with the prescribed regulations.

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AND THE SWORD

It is understandable that this socialistic, communistic constitution must have worked very attractively on all the followers of Islam, so that every one of them espoused the cause with joy and a contempt for death which to them, in case they lived, brought considerable benefit and fixed incomes, while, should they die, the happiness of paradise was secured to them.

This circumstance, and allied to it the allegation that Islam was spread at the point of the sword, and, last but not least, the imposition of a capitation-tax on non-Muslims, are some of those accusations to which the teachings of Muhammad are held to be open. Such allegations, however, suffer consistently from a lack of appreciation and a scrupulous and convenient forgetting of the means which other religions have employed for proselytizing purposes. Herder has very rightly observed, on this point, the following: "It is a pity that the Arabs even in this respect had the precedent of Christianity before them, which of all religions always forced on foreign peoples its own belief as being a necessary condition for happiness and salvation. The Arab did not convert through women, monks, and underhand methods, but as would become a man of the desert, sword in hand and with a demanding voice of challenge: 'Tribute or Faith.'" But if we take exception to Herder's

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view as being opposed to the well-known tolerance of the Muslims, it must be understood that much that is exaggerated has been advanced both for and against that tolerance. First of all, the concepts of humanity and tolerance had quite another value in ancient times, and during the Middle Ages to that which is accorded to them nowadays among those peoples that determine the world's civilization. Uncivilized peoples swing often to and fro between unintelligible mildness and unimaginable cruelty, because they mostly yield and give expression to the impulse, generally unreasoned, of the moment. The Semites, generally speaking, exhibit as a rule, especially in the early periods of their existence, a great impatience in all matters religious, which was the result of their natural self-consciousness and subjectivism. And fanatics, whatsoever cause they may represent, are seldom tolerant. Moreover, Muhammad himself was compelled to draw the sword through the opposition of the Meccans. He was forced—as everyone will be forced—to protect with the sword his faith and spread it. He believed his faith to be the only means of salvation to his people and the only true faith. From this step of Muhammad the militant aspect of Islam was ordained from the beginning. Just as Muhammad, so far as political interests permitted, yielded to his natural inclination towards mildness, as in the case of his vanquished enemies, so also did the Arabs in general, provided their fanaticism was not excited to a blind rage through too obstinate opposition, faithlessness, infidelity, or mischievousness. That this army, composed as it was of uncivilized fanatics—and the Arabian Muslims in the first century after Muhammad were little else than such—confined itself to imposing a tax on non-Muslims, instead of forcing them to accept Islam with all the violence at their disposal, is in reality a most eloquent tribute to their tolerance. Such tolerance we should have looked for still less from the fierce and warlike Bedouins, especially when we remember that the inability of the Byzantine and Persian troops to offer them any effective opposition should have tended to make them boastful and exultant above the ordinary. But, on the other hand, this much is certain: that wherever fanaticism and dogmatic orthodoxy ruled and predominated, patience with

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liberal movements and the spread of knowledge was practically non-existent; that the latter could only prosper where the power of orthodoxy was broken; and that as soon as ever liberal beliefs once again triumphed over free and liberal ideas the Arabian-Moorish culture fell to ruins. When we consider all these things we ought most decidedly to protest against the view that conversion by forcible means had ever in Islam passed into a general system. Further, the history of Islamic peoples gives proofs of the fact that most of the numerous wars—a portion of which was undoubtedly stained with blood—which led to the decline of the caliphate—the great independent parts of it, that is—are all of them to be traced back to ethnical reasons. The contrast between the races and peoples, which came in touch with each other within the caliphate and through Islam, political reasons, and last of all the greed, ambition, and selfishness of the governors and officials, office-hunters, and deposed princes, were the main causes of the decline of the caliphate. That in many cases the political aims were bound up with religious aims is very natural, so also, now and then, certain of the more militant sects caused great commotion and disturbance of a disruptive tendency. That wars against non-Muslims were religious and for the sake of religion, and were undertaken by Muslims for the oppression of other religions, is not only, generally speaking, out of the question, but also even in special cases it would be very difficult to prove that material and political reasons were not the real causes of those wars.

(To be continued.)

ISLAM, THE GUIDE TO MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT¹

By LORD HEADLEY

WE have only recently seen that an attempt to Westernize and Modernize the East has led to a considerable amount of

¹ Being the text of a lecture delivered before the British Muslim Society, London, at the London Muslim Prayer House, 111, Campden Hill Road, London, W. 8, on Sunday, February 10th, at 5 p.m. Mr. 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, I.C.S. (retd.), C.B.E., was in the chair.

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friction in Afghanistan, and it may seem to some of my friends that I am rather bold to even mention the word "modernize." However, it is better to be prepared for any proposals for reform—especially if they are likely to be in the right direction—than to be identified with those stick-in-the-mud principles which leave us unprotected and in the dark at the critical time.

Analogies are to be found in the story of the wise and foolish virgins and the ostrich hiding his head in the sand to avoid the hunter. We must look things in the face—as they are, and not merely as we should like them to be.

The modernization of Islam does not necessarily mean the Westernization of Islam; it is hard to conceive how our blessed Faith can make satisfactory advance in, say, England without certain insignificant modifications of forms or ceremonies to suit the new environment. In other words, it must be recognized that different conditions and temperaments require special handling. There will be much opposition, but those who have at heart the spread of our simple Faith for the great benefit of mankind must be prepared to go through trials and unjust attacks to gain the desired end:—

The oak strikes deeper as its boughs by furious blasts are driven;
So earth's vicissitudes the more have fixed my heart in Heaven.

A faithful man will face any danger or disaster, even to jumping into hell-fire, if he believes he is doing the will of Allah. It may be a leap in the dark, *so far as he can see with his earthly eyes*, but if his heart (which is all that really matters) tells him that the jump is *in the right direction*, he will have no fear, because he knows that the arms of the All-seeing and All-wise are there to receive him in the flaming abyss and that no harm can touch him. Only those who have passed unscathed through the direst afflictions known to poor humanity can realize what this means.

A few years ago I wrote the following in a little booklet entitled *Thoughts of the Future*:—

"After over forty years of thought and prayerful effort to arrive at a correct view, the dominant idea in my mind is that the whole fabric of so-called religion is of man and not of God. But I must also confess that visits to the East have

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filled me with a very deep respect for the simple Faith of the Muhammadans, who really do worship God all the time and not only on Sunday. Their beautiful trust in their Almighty and Merciful Creator, Who is never absent from them for a moment of the day or night, awakens feelings of the keenest sympathy in my heart. I love to join in the devout praise of the earnest Mussulman because I know he is genuine; there is no pretence about him when he takes off the little bit of carpet from his horse's back and prostrates himself before his Maker. This happens several times every day from sunrise to sunset, and in his devout and happy mind he is present with God Himself. There has been no need of priestly aid; he has found the Mercy Seat alone and without any help from any outside source whatever.

"That saintly man General Charles Gordon said of the Muhammadans: 'I do not see the sect of the Pharisees among the Mussulmans. Whatever they may think, they never assume, as our Pharisees do, that A and B are doomed to be burned; and you never see the very unamiable features which are shown by our Pharisees.'"

My own comparatively short experience enables me to endorse the good General's words. I have never heard one Muslim of all the many hundreds I know say that members of other religious communities would infallibly be lost or damned. But members of the Church in which I was brought up have repeatedly assured me that I cannot possibly be saved because I do not believe in the necessity of the Christian dogmas.

I am told that there is a considerable similarity between certain of the advanced puritanical sects in Arabia, Afghanistan, and Central Africa, and I hear that the first named go so far as to forbid the use of coffee and tobacco—thus carrying asceticism to a quite impossible length so far as European countries are concerned.

Modernization may, I think, be looked upon as the offspring of time and science; the former cannot be hurried, but the latter is dashing ahead with bounds quite out of keeping with that *otium cum dignitate* so much in favour with Eastern

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peoples. Inventions and innovations appear in such quantities that it almost seems as though some check should be applied! The introductions of new methods, whether of laws, customs, or religions, should never be hastily conceived or carried out, though one should always be on the alert to encourage learning and improvement. This is entirely in harmony with the teachings of our Holy Prophet.

Japan affords a wonderful example of rapid advancement through sheer determination to copy the best of everything in the world. I have been told that not many years ago the great Mikado sent out scouts to every country in the world to find out which had the best religion. These scouts duly delivered their report, and the Japanese committee appointed to go into the question came to the conclusion that their own religion was at least as good as any of the others, and they decided to retain it and make no change. Similar methods were employed with regard to armaments, but with vastly different results.

I am old enough to remember Japan a "bow-and-arrow" nation, and now, thanks to the wonderful adaptability and tenacity of its people, it has emerged from the struggle for modernity with a most effective and up-to-date army and navy. Two or three years ago I had the honour of being asked, at a big dinner, to propose the health of His Majesty the King of Afghanistan and wondering what I might safely say. That uncomfortable half-minute just before rising to speak was upon me when the happy thought came into my mind that there could be no harm in mentioning certain points of resemblance between the Rulers of the Afghans and the Japanese. I was at once furnished with the material for an interesting comparison; unlike in so many ways, there was that one strong bond of similarity and sympathy between the two monarchs—PROGRESS. Most Eastern nations are intensely conservative and hang with limpet-like tenacity to ancient usages; the hurry-scurry of the West is nothing less than indecent haste in their eyes. Stagnation is intolerable, and is hated by nature even more than a vacuum; but so much depends upon the *rate* of progress, and I think we shall have to exercise

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the utmost caution in avoiding precipitate action or that *ex cathedra* way of giving advice which is so dear to many religionists and so exasperating to those who hold different opinions.

I have now to make a few remarks and offer one or two suggestions chiefly concerning the religious services in the Mosques.

THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF MUSIC

It cannot be denied that most human beings are drawn towards anything which pleases the senses, and this is one of the main reasons for the wonderful success of the oldest branch of the Christian Church, where we find beautiful paintings, beautiful statuary, beautiful music, exquisite perfumes burned in censers and wafted about by beautiful children clad in immaculate linen garments singing the most exquisite sacred music. Few people, in the West at least, can avoid being much impressed by one or more of these attractive influences, and there is little wonder that Roman Catholic cathedrals and churches are often more crowded than Protestant places of worship where the ornamentation is far less pronounced. Indeed, in running down the gamut of attractiveness in Church services in Christianity you will be surprised at the changes between the Romish ceremonial, the Anglican High Church right away down to the Primitive Methodists who represent, I believe, the lowest of the Low Church communities.

But what do we find in Islam? About the only adjunct of the Muslim is the small piece of carpet on which he stands, kneels, and prostrates. He is entirely absorbed in praise and prayer to Allah. The *Fātiḥā* and other beautiful addresses occupy his whole attention, and he is uninfluenced by his surroundings. Even the little accessory—the carpet—can be dispensed with and the omission in no way interferes with the realities and fervency of the supplications. He is independent of any human aid, and is not influenced by any save the One Great Author of his being.

As a Westerner to whom music and art appeal very strongly, I have to admit that all the sensuous influences tend to inter-

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fere with my devotions—one should require no reminders or aids when opening one's heart and mind to God. I find an analogy in almost any large gathering where the music is provided by way of entertainment: if any very fine composition is being rendered, I want to listen to the melody or the rhythm and find it impossible to talk coherently or, vice versa, if I want to talk on some important matter the starting of music puts all the ideas out of my head.

At all times of devotion earthly considerations should fall into insignificance, and to my mind the grand solitude of the snow-clad mountain peaks seems ideal for thanksgiving and contemplation.

But also there is something very inspiring in service in the Mosque with hundreds of our brothers, all attracted there, not by pictures or by statues or graven images of any kind, but by the worship of the one and only God—"THEE, THEE ONLY DO WE WORSHIP," and of "THEE ALONE DO WE BEG ASSISTANCE; DIRECT US IN THE RIGHT WAY."

We are reminded by the simple lines of that most beautiful prayer the Fātihā that there are no distractions which need concern us. Allah o Akbar covers everything, whilst praise, that acme of prayer and essence of thanksgiving, is the keynote of our devotions. What always strikes me in our services in the Mosques is the absence of any grovelling petitions for specific advantages or favours—all is merged or lost in the happy knowledge that God is with us and attending to our wants and listening to our tribute of gratitude for past mercies. Such considerations as these lead me to suppose that there are many who are at present far from satisfied with the unbending and relentless character of the Christian dogmas who will be only too glad to find peace and rest in the simple Faith of Islam.

It would ill become me to suggest any change in essential customs or ceremonials; I am merely hinting at the possibility of minor changes which could not be objected to either from the Christian or the Muslim standpoint. In alluding to music and its wonderful influence on certain people it has often occurred to me that Islam might gain many more adherents

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in the Western world if certain of the Christian hymns, which are very beautiful and free from any dogmatic taint, were introduced, not into the Mosques themselves, but into the lecture-halls or adjacent rooms on suitable or appropriate occasions.

Though I have not consulted any of my more learned brethren on the subject, I feel sure that the majority of them will recognize the fact that, in exercising my own personal individual feelings in the matter, I am merely influenced by the strongest desire to leave no stone unturned which may lead to harmony when Islam is more fully appreciated in the West. There is no doubt, however, that there will be many Easterners as well as Westerners who will cavil at and raise objections to my venturing on such thin ice, even if I propose to make selections from those hymns and anthems where God alone is mentioned. My general idea is that any sentiments *entirely consonant with the lines of the Holy Qur-án might be set to the very beautiful music we find in, say, "Hymns, Ancient and Modern."*

For instance, what fault could any good Muslim find with Hymn 26, "God, Who madest earth and heaven"; or with the first verse of Hymn 370, "Eternal Father, strong to save"; or with Hymn 165, "O God, our help in ages past"; or with the first two verses of Hymn 379, "Now thank we all our God"?—and there are many other hymns with beautiful words and music, and those, where the music is beautiful and the words—from our point of view—not suitable, could be supplied with words from the Holy Qur-án.

There are doubtless many who will object to such proposals as these, but I trust that a fuller recognition of the fact that God made us all, and listens to all our supplications, will in time convince them that the great brotherhood of Islam is far above all selfishness and longs for the betterment of the whole human race.

A curious case of intolerance was very recently brought to my notice. I had attended the memorial service of an old friend in one of the City churches and was afterwards commenting on the beauty of the simple service and the affectionate words of

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the kindly clergyman—also a friend of the deceased—when a very extra Christian lady who had heard my remarks intimated that I had no right to be in a Christian place of worship at all. She was of opinion that my very presence was a contamination and that I should have been excluded from the sacred edifice merely because I hold religious views at variance with her own—not on matters of ethics or conduct, but merely on questions of opinion or such as are the outcome of dogmatic assertions from a particular class of religionists. I can quite imagine the sort of “lost-sheep” groaning that must have gone on over me and my benighted condition as a non-believer in the now happily weakening dogmas of Christianity. All such criticism is perhaps to be expected, and I don’t mind it very much; what I do rather resent is that any sane member of society should wish to exclude me from a sacred building devoted to the public service of God.

I don’t like *that*, and I make so bold as to say that the gentle Jesus, whose precepts all good Muslims endeavour to follow, would never sanction the spurning of any human being who wished to worship in His Father’s House. How unfair and narrow are these people who persist in thinking that they have a prescriptive right to God’s attention. To all such I would say: “Be a little more humble; show more toleration; don’t be so cocksure of your own ‘salvation’ and the damnation of others, and you will find yourself able to do more good and command more respect.”

The “believe-or-be-damned” cult never did and never will command respect or inspire love, and it is quite out of place in the present day, when we should like to say “Be good because God wills it so,” and not “Be good because if you don’t you will be damned.” As a further instance of intolerance I may mention the case of a poor old grandfather who was objected to and made to feel uncomfortable at the christening of one of his grandchildren merely because he was a Muslim and, as such, not fit to be in a church. Of course he could not, for the same reason, attend the marriage service of any of his children. All this seems so paltry and so mean, and in such broad contrast to the action of the Holy Prophet

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Muhammad, who, when he heard that certain Christians in his custody had no place in which to hold their service, at once said: "Please use our Mosque as your place of worship"; and in the Muslim Mosque the service was subsequently held without any very lamentable results either to the Christians or the Muslims. Possibly kindly and brotherly feelings were aroused by the broadminded and friendly act which at the time set such an excellent example of toleration.

It may seem to certain of my hearers that I make too much of these points, but I purposely do so in order that we should be prepared and not suffer ourselves to be surprised at the treatment we may receive at the hands of fanatical sects which are to be found in greater profusion in Christianity than in Islam.

Suppose, for the sake of argument only, that Muslims in England wished to encourage the use of sacred music: there is nothing inherently wrong in this from the Islamic point of view, but it is highly probable that the narrow-minded amongst the puritanical religionists might raise objections. I think, however, that there are many broadminded members of the Church of England who would be glad to think that some of the beautiful music in, say, "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" could be set to appropriate Muslim words all in the praise of Allah and the inculcation of the precepts laid down by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sacred music¹ is, to my mind, entirely consonant with the Islamic idea of praise: as the *Fātihā* begins "Praise be to Thee, O God," so we might start our lectures or social functions with singing hymns in praise of Allah, then go on with the lectures or other social functions, and then conclude by hymns of gratitude and praise for all past mercies. Such a simple service would be reverently appreciated by all those who have been accustomed to Western choral services, and need not hurt the feelings of the Easterns.

We must expect opposition from fanatics—both Christian

¹ At the time of writing I have also in my mind the parallel in the Chishtya school of thought amongst the Indian Muslims as well as the Dervishes.

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and Muslim—and I have no doubt that even in the simple matter of making use of the *tunes* from Christian hymn-books there will be serious opposition. I would suggest that in these days, when we see the whole human family closely woven, as it were, into one fabric we must think on modernized lines all along the front. Inventions have brought my quondam neighbour of ten thousand miles' distance into a very close proximity—I can talk to him, see him, and almost shake hands with him. Distance no longer keeps us apart; indeed, science may before long contrive some marvellous way of utilizing some of the as yet undiscovered mysteries of Nature so that whole families scattered over the face of the globe may be able to meet and talk to one another in their own voices. Would that be so very much more wonderful than what we can do now?

There can be no stagnation; we are progressing, but it is very hard to say whether the world is, on the whole, improving or deteriorating: it cannot help becoming more "modern" as time goes on, but the modern of to-day is the ancient history of a few years hence.

The vast strides of chemistry have led us into making discoveries of enormous value to the human race and also providing methods whereby tens of thousands of our fellow-creatures may be swept into eternity without even a warning. High explosives and poison gas have amply illustrated how alleged civilized nations can be made to deal with one another when differences arise. The Crusades, started in the eleventh century by a Christian country, must have been looked upon in those days as a wonderful modern advance in the right direction. Was it?

One would think that education would have done much to improve the world, but, when we look around and take toll of the crime we are bound to question this. Only think of it!—it is said that last year there were 12,000 cases of murder in one civilized country with a population of less than 120,000,000: such figures are staggering, even if they are only approximately correct. If education and religion cannot improve us, to what can we look? Education often

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makes us discontented or conceited, whilst religion frequently induces rancour and uncharitableness.

I think I am right in saying that nearly all religions are ostensibly centred on the work of inducing men to do their duty to their neighbours. But unfortunately there does not seem to be a single example of a Faith which has not more or less broken down because of the arrogant statements or enactments of a class of men who have set themselves up as special authorities on sacred matters, who hold the keys of Heaven and command the obedience of the ignorant and superstitious.

Islam is surely the most free from gross improbabilities, and from its very simplicity it affords fewer footholds for sacerdotal interference and trickery. I am sometimes asked questions about essentials and non-essentials, and not very long ago I received a letter from my friend Mr. Dard, the Imam of the Mosque at Southfields, in which he makes inquiries as to my views on certain subjects. He begins by an allusion to my lecture entitled "Is our House in Order?" delivered in London on July 29, 1928. He asks me to enlighten him on the following points raised in that lecture, viz.:—

(1) To what outward forms and ceremonies of Islam do you refer in the following: "Similarly, I am unable to obtain any satisfactory evidence, from the Qur-án or elsewhere, that many of the outward forms and ceremonies of modern Islam were ever laid down by the Holy Prophet of Arabia as essential to the Muslim Faith?"

(2) What do you mean by "schism and those sacerdotal dogmas" from which you want Islam to be purged?

(3) Is it *essential* for salvation to offer the five daily prayers as prescribed by the Holy Prophet?"

Since there is nothing private or confidential in Mr. Dard's letter, I am sure he will not mind my briefly replying in these pages, for then other people will have an opportunity of weighing some of the arguments. To begin with No. (1). So far as I know the only essentials are submission to Allah and good works. Peace with God implies complete submission

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to the Will of Him Who is the source of all purity and goodness, and peace with man implies the exercise of the highest form of altruism—sympathy with one's fellow-man and the wish to treat him as you would like him to treat you. This is the keynote of Islam, and is beautifully expressed as follows: "Yes, he who submits himself entirely to Allah, and is the doer of good (to others) has his reward from his Lord, and he shall have no fear, nor shall he grieve" (Qur-án, ii. 112). That, and that only, is *salvation* according to the Holy Qur-án. Do not think that I am trying to belittle the desirability and utility of many forms and ceremonies, public worship, etc.; I am only contending that all these outward and visible signs are completely insignificant when compared with the inner workings of the heart and mind. A man might be a good Muslim without ever going inside a Mosque, but all the Rak'ats or prostrations or pilgrimages to Mecca in the world will not make him a good Muslim if he has not the love of Allah in his heart. One of the great advantages of Islam as a religion is that the constant prayers enjoined make it unlikely that really wicked or cruel thoughts will be harboured in the breast. It is difficult to imagine that any true Muslim honestly opening his heart to the Almighty five times a day could at the end of the day continue to harbour thoughts which his conscience tells him are base or criminal. I shall never forget the time when I first read and understood the true spirit of that most magnificent of all prayers—the Fātihā. It appealed to me with irresistible force because of the prominence of praise and gratitude and the simple request to be directed in God's way. No other prayer has ever touched me in the same way, and I often wake up in the morning repeating it as in a dream. Part of the strength of Islam is shown in the simplicity of the prayers and the places of worship, clearly indicating a religion of the inner feelings rather than outward show. I think that in these few lines I have demonstrated that the essentials come before the outward forms and that it is impossible that the Holy Prophet could have ever decided otherwise.

As regards No. (2) I refer to the trouble caused by new

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sects which spring up with quite new ideas about what constitutes a follower of Islam. As an example I point to the Quadianis, followers of that very admirable teacher Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, whom they hold up with veneration as the "Promised Messiah." This would not matter so very much, but they become bellicose if other Muslims decline to believe that he was the Messiah. I cannot but look upon these people as hostile to the spread of Islam to the West because their tenets indicate complete severance from the orthodox Muslims who are of the Hanifa persuasion. Lest you should think I am making too much complaint, I may point out that a Quadiani is not allowed to give his daughter to a Muslim who is not a Quadiani. A Quadiani is not allowed to say his prayers in a Mosque if the officiating Imam is not an Ahmadian of the Quadian, and finally a Quadiani may not attend the funeral service of his dearest friend unless that friend is a Quadiani—thus carrying the unpleasant curtailments and restrictions even to the grave.

It is also specially laid down that unless a man believes that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was really the Messiah, that man shall be deprived of the light of Faith, and that it is as bad for him as though he denied his belief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad himself. In other words, he becomes a kafir. I cannot help feeling that this high-handed action on the part of a small sect is to be deprecated as very unwise. People sometimes ask me if the Quadianis are really Muslims, and I invariably reply: "Yes, they are undoubtedly Muslims, but I think they have deviated somewhat from the ordinary course."

The fact of the matter is that every fresh sect weakens the community of interests we like to observe in Islam. When sects spring up on every side, we can no longer hope to show that solidarity which is so essential to convince our opponents. And the worst of it is that certain of these sects are quite uncompromising; they lay down the law, tell us what we ought and what we ought not to do, and expect the whole Muslim world to bow down at the *ipse dixit* of a small fraction of its members. I have recently had opportunities of finding

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out how bitterly jealous many of the Muslim sects are of one another and what a general absence of unanimity exists throughout the world of Islam. It is infinitely sad that it should be so, because Westerners, flying to Islam for relief from the fanatical teachings in many branches of Christianity, find themselves confronted by a set of conditions not so very much better than those they are trying to get away from.

So that in answer to Mr. Dard's second question I have endeavoured to show the danger of schisms and the great disservice done to Islam by sects such as his own.

As regards question (3), I should say most certainly it is *not essential* for salvation to offer the five daily prayers as prescribed by the Holy Prophet. All good Muslims are ordered to say their prayers five times a day. This is obligatory and should never be omitted, but to try to make out that a man's salvation depends on it savours too much of the Christian condemnatory creed of St. Athanasius. Most good Muslims say their prayers far oftener than five times—it is the spirit of praise and prayer which dwelt in the heart of the Holy Prophet and was raised to Allah all day and all night which we should endeavour to copy. Do not think that I underrate the desirability of regular hours for prayer, ablution, fasting, etc., etc. I do not; I merely say that they are not *necessary to salvation* any more than "thinking of the Trinity" in a particular way or believing in the Divinity of Christ or the Atonement is necessary to salvation for the Christians. The essentials are—for Muslims and Christians alike—a firm belief in God and complete surrender to His Almighty Will, and beneficence to all our fellow-creatures whom He allows to share this world with us. It is what we *do* that counts rather than what we think or imagine. The Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus and Muhammad seem to me to give sufficient indication of all God wishes us to attempt to do to the best of our ability. None of the dogmas and man-devised adaptations of pagan rites or pre-historic sacrifices are worthy of the serious consideration of intelligent people at this stage of the world's history.

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To make "wrong" "right" by added wrong
Is tried at every point adown
The sacrificial vista long
With craven fear, lest God should frown.

Oh God, whose mercy shineth forth,
Wilt Thou wreak vengeance on Thine own?
Can murders foul appease Thy wrath?
Can cruel deaths for sin atone?

The man-made dogmas of the past,
In many forms still hold full sway—
We pray that change may come at last
When darkness meets the light of day.

When I was a boy, some sixty or seventy years ago, it was quite possible to meet people who firmly believed in the "angry God" waiting to be propitiated by the smell of burnt offerings and shedding of innocent blood; in the present day, thanks to the march of science, these crude and whimsical ideas of the Creator are fading away, and I don't suppose there is one person in a thousand who really and truly believes that the Almighty is in any way influenced by senseless acts of cruelty. As I have said before, it seems unthinkable that my God, a Being of infinite power and goodness, should stand in need of "propitiating." The Eternal Father, "strong to save," has made us and ordered a marvellous scheme for our life on this earth—the intricacies of which are far beyond our furthest vision and which our highest intelligence fails to comprehend—and I cannot believe that He will hide His face from me unless I kill something or some horrible sacrifice is made.

THE NEW LONDON NIZAMIAH MOSQUE

As most of my hearers are aware, it has been decided to build a Mosque in London, and towards the end of 1927 I went to India for the purpose of collecting sufficient funds for the building of a really fine edifice somewhere not too far from the centre of the Metropolis. I had hoped to secure a site free, but as that was not possible I have been looking out for about an acre of freehold land and have found that the price is often quite prohibitive. This Mosque is to be

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named after my kind friend the Nizam of Hyderabad, with whom I stayed nearly two months and who contributed the munificent sum of £60,000 towards the cost.

There is a very pretty little Mosque at Woking, but it is rather too small and so far from London that it is only on occasions of festivals that people go there in anything like numbers. There is also a Mosque at Southfields, not far from Putney; this also is rather far from central London, and it labours under the disadvantage of being sectarian; indeed, it is the headquarters of the Quadianis whose methods and tenets I have previously alluded to as being difficult to reconcile with the ordinary orthodox Muslim Faith.

As to the proposed London Nizamiah Mosque, I would suggest that the central portion or body should be laid out in the Eastern manner, i.e. with spaces suitable for prostration, and that on both sides, and at the back of the floor space, there should be rows of chairs or benches suitable for those Western and Eastern Muslims who are unable to gracefully follow the various postures of Muslim worship. The question of bending the knee-joint presents the greatest difficulty. Most Easterners have been accustomed from earliest childhood to sit on the floor with the upper portion of the hips resting on the heels, and this is a position which few Europeans can assume rapidly and easily recover from. But because of this disability there should be no question as to eligibility to the ranks of Islam. Then again, the aged and infirm find even the prostration hard to accomplish, though most old people find it far easier than the sitting-on-the-heels attitude. It is indeed to be hoped that common sense and a true understanding of what "Modernization" means will smooth over all these minor difficulties and that people will realize that it is *the Spirit of the Faith* we want, and intention with which the action is done that matters: the true understanding of all that Moses, Christ, and Muhammad inculcated through the divine messages from Allah: the knowledge that in doing our duty to our fellow-creatures we are obeying the Will of Allah—all these are essentials to the followers of Islam.

We wish and shall continue to follow as far as possible all

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the attitudes and postures now followed by Muslims in general.

There is one matter I wish to lay great emphasis on, and it is this: *there must be no taint whatever of sectarianism in the London Nizamiah Mosque*. The followers of all religions will be welcome to attend, but neither the Imam nor anyone conducting the services or delivering addresses will be allowed to favour any particular sect. We hope to be entirely guided by the teachings of the Holy Qur-án. I know that this is the earnest desire of His Exalted Highness the Nizam; it is certainly my wish, as Chairman of the Trust, and I am sure that the other Trustees take the same view.

Having thus dealt at some length with the question of religious services and music, I propose now to turn to a consideration of fasting and abstinence from strong drink.

TEMPERANCE

Respecting this it would seem to almost go without saying that since most of the crime and trouble in the civilized countries of the world can be traced directly or indirectly to the abuse of alcoholic stimulants, we should all welcome the advent of a creed which enjoins temperance and abstinence from intoxicants. We have only to look at the drink bill of England and other European countries to receive a shock.

Hundreds of millions expended and not very much good to be shown in return for the heavy outlay but a very great deal of evil, as the police-courts can tell. We could *live* without stimulants; our health would possibly be better, we should have more in hand for necessities, and—greatest boon of all—we should be much more free from crime.

Strict Muslims will not touch intoxicating drinks, and thus set an example of total abstinence which should recommend itself to the temperance party in any country. Drinking in moderation is the custom in most Western countries, and the bulk of the Western people will always be ready to welcome and to recognize with favour—even if they do not entirely follow—any pure religion which promotes sobriety and prevents waste. We should not in the beginning attempt to insist

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on the strict observance of certain points; for thus we may lay ourselves open to the charges we ourselves make against our Christian brethren, who insist that certain ceremonials and belief in dogmas are *necessary for salvation*.

For example, it is quite impossible for the busy city man to pray Muslim fashion five times daily at the appointed hours; the opportunities for prostration and conventional devotion cannot be found, but the man himself may be none the less a true follower of the Holy Prophet. He probably sends up the silent prayer that the *Holy Spirit of Allah may in all things direct and rule his heart*; and surely this will be accepted above even though he has not had the opportunity of humbly placing his forehead on the ground.

There are many things in this world which are highly desirable but not essential. It is desirable to wash before and after meals, but it is not always possible, and is not absolutely necessary. The only essential is the food itself and, of course, the gratitude which should be shown by the consumer. I firmly believe that the grand truths of Islam will appeal to vast numbers of men and women who are craving for the food of a real religion—with a living God as their Guide—and whose intelligence has for too long trifled with unstable dogmas of pagan origin.

There are some people who may not agree with me in all I have said, but there is certainly one argument often used with reference to the drink question which is a strong one; it is this: Human nature is weak and so much damage is often done, not only to the individual but to others as well, that this particular temptation should be removed altogether. The Islamic influence would undoubtedly be directed towards lessening the danger of alcoholic stimulants, and I think myself that it would be far more efficacious than prohibition, which has led to so much deceit and illicit drinking in the United States.

What we have to do is to find out if it is possible to harmonize so that there can be no chance of a serious split on any vital point. Habits and customs due to geographical position or temperament should be no bar to that give-and-

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take spirit which is cultivated by so many broad-minded Christians and Muslims in the present day.

The Christian who has just embraced Islam should feel no change come over him in the matter of his duty to God and his neighbour. He should feel like one who has been relieved of a burden—the burden of senseless dogma and pagan rites—or, as I once said of myself, like a man coming out of a dark tunnel into the light of day.

OTHER SOURCES OF CHRISTIANITY

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

I WONDER if there is anything left in Christianity which cannot, in the light of present-day research, be traced to pre-Christian sources. My book *Sources of Christianity*, which traces everything in the Formal Church to Paganism, with Jesus as a recast of Mithra or other Sun-God, has till now remained uncontroverted. It is, however, said that Jesus, as recorded in the four Gospels, is not devoid of original qualities; and it is true that the Jesus of the Gospel narrative is a distinct character from that set forth in Pauline literature. The picture of the latter has admittedly been drawn from Pagan sources, but it is said that the former has not been decked in borrowed plumes. Though the said record be in itself not genuine, yet, they say, it was based on traditions authoritatively handed down from the days of Jesus. Yet even this position is not tenable. Jesus may be accepted as a genuine Hebrew prophet, preaching and travelling from place to place like other Rabbis in Judea; but this is not sufficient to make him the Lord of Christianity—a position given him on quite other grounds, such as his birth, fasting for forty days, temptation, sermons, miracles, resurrection, and ascension.

Unfortunately we find all these events in the life of Gautama, the founder of the Buddhist faith, who, admittedly, is an historic character and who counts millions of people in his following. Buddha was born of a Royal house some five hundred years before the birth of Jesus. His princely environ-

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ment did not satisfy him, and he left his home and kingdom in search of true Knowledge, and afterwards founded a system of religion, with ethics which in their idealistic beauty surpass the sayings of Jesus. His birth may also be styled an outcome of a so-called Immaculate Conception, his mother was not without a husband, and if in the case of Jesus an angel appeared to Joseph informing him of the pregnancy of Mary that was of the Holy Ghost, Maya, the mother of Buddha, saw in a vision a white elephant descending from Heaven that entered into her womb. Next day she found herself with child. Then comes the event of birth, and here I find the Buddhist imagination higher and, if I may so put it, more detailed than that of the Evangelists. Buddha does not emerge from the womb through the ordinary channel, but he is born from the right side of his mother. His birth is also attended with celestial songs and many other manifestations in the heavens, similar to those of which we read in connection with the births of various gods incarnate, including Jesus. Buddha also fasted, but it was for a longer period than Jesus—six months. Then comes Temptation: the devil appears to Buddha and offers him the kingdom of the world and the glory of them. He also presents to Buddha his daughters, to be taken by him as wives, they being the most beautiful damsels of the day; but the lord Buddha rejects the Satanic offer. After the temptation was over Buddha received Illumination, and began to preach concerning the Light which had been vouchsafed to him. His first sermon was also from a mount in Benares. Into his preaching he often introduced parables to illustrate his meaning, and many of these parables are identical with those we read in the Bible as ascribed to Jesus. Among his miracles, which are more numerous than those of Jesus, he appears to walk on the waters of the Ganges; and the same thing we read about Jesus, with a change of place and scene.

The conquest of the serpent by Christ is only an inferential belief as the sequel to the events of the Garden of Eden not reported as a fact in the case of Jesus; but Buddha did fight with a serpent, which serpent was no other than Satan himself in the form of a snake. Buddha slew the serpent and thus

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conquered Satan. He also ascended into Heaven, where he remained for a time and afterwards returned in his lifetime ; while in the case of Jesus all this is only a matter of belief.

Later on I will show that most of the teachings that have been ascribed to Jesus can easily be traced to the sacred lips of Buddha, but the facts disclosed above clearly establish that all the colours used by the Evangelists to paint the Nazarene as the son of God were of Buddhistic origin. It is a well-known fact that after Sylucus, Bacteria, the capital of the Greek Empire in Central Asia, became the cradle of Buddhistic lore, from which place its doctrines travelled to Greece.

If the birth of Christianity took place in a land of Paganism, that country was not free from the influence of the Buddhistic tradition. Some of the critics of my book, *The Sources of Christianity*, say that the heroes of mystery cults were all creations of fiction, but Buddha undoubtedly is more historic than Jesus. Some of the best thinkers have even denied the very existence of the Nazarene, but nothing can be, or has been, said against Buddha.

Thus if we denude Jesus of all that was already existing in Pagan or Buddhistic literature, there remains nothing in his record that could be claimed as belonging to him. In short, Jesus as pictured in the Pauline literature is a Pagan Sun-God in the garb of a Jewish Christ, while the picture given of him in the four Gospels is that of Buddha in the guise of a Hebrew prophet.

MODERNIZATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM

By DR. MUHAMMAD SHAHĪDU 'L-LAH, M.A., B.L.,

Editor, *The Peace*, Dacca, India

THE whole world has changed. Should Islam and the Muslims only remain unchanged? That is the question which agitates the mind of our young Muslim generation. Islam has been stigmatized by Christian controversialists as "stiff as a dead man's hand," incapable of reformation or progress. Our

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conservative section—and they are indeed the vast majority—take pride in the assumption that while other laws and codes change, Islamic laws are immutable. The Turks, on the other hand, in their frenzy for modernization, are bent upon doing away with everything which does not conform to their own standard of civilization. That is why in the Muslim world we find the stoning to death of an apostate in one country, then in another the total adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, the agitation for *khilāfat* in one country and its abolition in another. So the important question before us is whether any reformation is possible in Islam. Christianity was totally transformed in the very century it arose by St. Paul, who changed its original Jewish character and impressed a Hellenistic stamp on it. Believing as we Muslims do in the finality and perfection of Islam, and also its Divine origin, it would seem on its surface that we are incapable of introducing any reforms in any way; at best we can only go back to the days of its pristine purity (*khairu 'l-Qur-ān*). Indeed, there are the words of the Holy Prophet, “*kullu bid'atin dhalālātun kullu dhalālātin fi 'n-Nār*,” i.e. “Every innovation is perversion, every perversion is for the hell fire.” Apparently, then, there is no hope for reformation in the light of Islam. According to this view, our new friends the Wahhabis are the only true followers of Islam.

But if we look back to the history of the orthodox schools of Islam, we shall see that there have been changes in *shariat*. Hanafism, Malikism, Shaf'iism, Hanbalism—all have contributed one after another to bring in new laws and new rules not only in matters secular but also in matters strictly religious. Even before the rise of schools of thought there were innovations introduced by the rightful caliphs (*al-Thulāfa u'r-Rāshidūn*) themselves. When Hadhrat 'Umar advised Hadhrat Abū Bakr to compile in one volume the contents of the Holy Qur-ān, he objected to it at first on the ground of its being an innovation; but at last he yielded to reason. Then there were also further innovations in the Sacred Code by inserting dots and vowel-points. So the very fountain-head of our religion in its present shape is the result of many innovations. The present form

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of the *talbiah*, the twenty rak'ats of *tarāwih* prayers, and the first prayer-call for the Friday congregational prayer are some of the prominent innovations made by the rightful caliphs themselves and observed even now by the Faithful as religious customs (*sunnat*) as much binding as the customs of the Holy Prophet. Even the Qur-án itself speaks of *the way of the faithful* (*sabīlu 'l-Mu'minin*) along with Islam. The Traditions also record some sayings of the Prophet touching this subject. One of them is: "When I command you about religious matters, take hold of them, and when I command you anything from my judgment, then I am a man like unto you." Another is: "Whoever establishes a good custom (*sunnat hasanah*) will have the same reward as one who follows it." The Prophet has also said to the effect that at the head of every hundred years a man will arise who will renovate Islam. So in the history of Islam we have so many *mujaddids* and *mujtahids*. So the fact remains that reformation is possible under Islam. But the reformation to be acceptable to Islam must be in conformity with the spirit of Islam. This spirit can only be gathered from the Holy Qur-án and the life of the Prophet, which is an interpretation and illustration of the abstract precepts of the Divine Book.

One will ask: How, then, is reformation possible in Islam? Our *Faqīhs* are responsible for the building-up of the present code of Islamic laws. Of course they were very learned and pious, and strictly followed the texts of the Qur-án and so much of the Traditions which had reached them. They were also guided by the *Ijmā'* or the consensus of the learned of the then Muslim world. In fact, they were fully qualified for the task. But they made a free use of analogical deductions (*qiyās*). Herein was a fruitful source of their failure, in spite of their best motives to legislate for all times to come. Who knows the future except God? Indeed, it is an accepted principle that the *Mujtahids*, like all judges and legislators, are liable to error, though they are generally correct. They took certain things as accepted truths for all times to come, and making them their premises, they drew the necessary conclusions. In some cases they found a certain thing good for

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their own time and they made it a rule of law. The very fact that there were so many *Mujtahids* one after another within the first three centuries of the Hijrah, differing among themselves and still respecting each other and being respected by the Muslim world, shows unmistakably that there is also need for *ijtihād* (legislation) for future times as well. Though it is an accepted principle that the door of *ijtihād* is not yet closed, practically for the last thousand years there have been no *mujtahids* among us of the rank of the four orthodox Imams of the Sunni School. So the Muslim world lags behind by a millennium.

If we come to concrete things from abstract, we shall find an illustration of this in the matter of *ribā* (interest). It has been prohibited in three places in the Qur-án (ii. 276; iii. 125; xxx. 38), and everywhere it has been mentioned in contrast with *sadaqah* (charity) or *zakāt* (poor-rate). In prohibiting interest the premises were that it is always an oppression (*zulm*) to take interest, and that the Muslims shall always be governed by their own laws, and that no non-Muslim shall be able to exact interest from Muslims. Now none of these conditions exist in India. It is certainly no oppression to take interest from the British Government. And then, though a pious Musalman cannot take interest, he is bound to give interest in India. The result has been that the Muslims are being impoverished and the other people are being enriched at their expense. In prohibiting *riba* the Qur-án says: "Do not oppress and do not be oppressed" (ii. 279). But though we cannot oppress, we are being oppressed. That the Qur-ánic prohibition against interest is not to be taken universally has been admitted by some *faqīhs* (legislators), who hold that it is legal in *daru 'l-Harb* (non-Muslim countries).

I do not claim here that each and every one of us should be reformers. But we should know that reformation is necessary, and when and where reformation will be felt necessary resort is to be had to the proper method. And that proper method has been supplied by *ijmā'*, which has been defined by Hanafī law-books as the consensus of the *mujtahids* from among the followers of Muhammad (peace be on him!) on any

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matter relating to *sharī'at* (practice of law and religion). In these days of leagues and conferences it is not at all difficult to convene a Muslim World Conference to decide such matters. Surely the Prophet has said, "Whatever the Muslims find good, that is good with God." The only condition or limitation is that it must not go against the spirit of Islam.

It is a matter of deep regret that even where there is provision for reformation in the text-books of law (*Fiqhah*) the Muslims do not take advantage of it. Take, for example, the election of the khalifah as against the innovation (*bid'at*) of the hereditary succession. Another glaring example of the spirit of retrogression in non-Arabic-speaking countries is the delivery of sermons in the Arabic which is unintelligible to the Imam and the congregation both alike, whereas Imām Abū Hanifah and his two disciples Abū Yūsuf and Muhammad are unanimous that it is permissible to deliver the sermon in Persian.

Islam should be reformed, if it should have a hold on the mind of the ever-increasing number of educated and thinking class of the Muslims and if it is to be propagated among the cultured people of the East and the West. But let there be renovation (*tajdīd*) and no innovation (*bid'at*).

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Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

Friends and well-wishers of the Working Muslim Organization will be sorry to learn that the veteran pioneer worker in the West in the path of Islam, Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, has been of late far from well. His indifferent health, with the other ailments to which it has naturally given rise, has been solely due to hard work and absolutely selfless labour. It will be recalled that he started the propagation of Islam in the West unaided and single-handed, and in a country where money is the mainspring of all activity. At that time his sole prop, his one source of trust, was God the Almighty. That

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God has crowned his trust with success is ample proof of the fact that selfless labours never remain unrewarded.

In the beginning of this year there was every hope of a speedy recovery, and we were more than glad to have this news; for we hoped that he would once more be able to come to England and resume his labour of love after an absence of three years. But as is unfortunately his way in his over-zeal for the service of the sacred cause, he once again disregarded medical advice. He sallied forth lecturing and touring Eastern India; but his nervous system, which had been under a constant strain ever since 1919, could not stand the stress of mental exertion, and the inevitable relapse occurred. He was once more forced to discontinue his public activities, and his long-contemplated translation of the Qur-án—with critical Preface—could not, under the circumstances, be prepared. He has, however, even during his illness, published a booklet entitled *Juhd li 'l-Baqā* in the Urdu language—a booklet which is a very masterly exposition of the opening chapter of the Holy Qur-án.

Through the medium of the *Islamic Review* he tenders his thanks to all friends who have inquired after his health and requests them to pray for him. And we pray that for years to come the person of the Khwaja Sāhib be spared to us to guide us and to preside over the destinies and activities of the Working Muslim Mission—an organization that has won appreciation all the world over, from friend and foe alike.

Ourselves.

We have scrupulously refrained from the practice of blowing our own trumpet; for we believe that it is by the fruit that the value of the tree is judged and known. During the last year an anonymous letter appeared in the Indian Press which imputed base motives both to the venerable Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and to Lord Headley. Although the letter, as was conclusively proved later, was not genuine, it naturally enough caused some stir. Evidently it was the work of someone who was eaten up by jealousy, or at least believed in the English saying, that if you only throw enough mud some is

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sure to stick. Much ink and time were wasted in refuting all the allegations brought forward, and now that the atmosphere is clear again we are glad to welcome a small pamphlet from the pen of Mr. Shaikh Mushīr Husain Kidwā'ī, of Gadia, Barābankī, India. The pamphlet is entitled *Islam in England*. The Shaikh Sāhib, be it noted, is the author of certain extremely interesting and quite extraordinary erudite booklets on some of the social aspects of Islam. By way of example we may cite *Woman under Different Social and Religious Laws*, *Muhammad the Sign of God*, and the like. The Shaikh Sāhib writes from intimate personal knowledge and vast experience of English conditions; for before and during the war he was in England and acting as Secretary of the Central Islamic Society, London, E.C. Speaking of the Woking Muslim Mission he writes thus:—

“ The credit of being the first to organize a regular Mission in England belongs to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. He is a marvellous preacher and can hold his own among the learned theologians of any religion. Even before he came to England he had built up a great reputation for himself as an orator. The educated Muslims of India were captivated by his discourses on Islam, and there is no doubt that in England also he, in a very short time, thoroughly established his position. There is no question of any new convert being fit to take his place in England when even among the seventy million Muslims of India I do not know of any other man who could have accomplished the self-assigned duty in a better way. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din is not only a good preacher, but he is an accomplished writer. The literature he has produced on Islam is itself a valuable treasure. He restored the Shahjehan Mosque at Woking and established the headquarters of the Muslim Mission there in 1913. His monthly *Islamic Review* has a wide circulation and has done immense service in removing many old-established prejudices of the English people against Islam. The secret of the success of his Mission is his sincerity and non-sectarianism. I found that it was pure and simple Islam that was preached at Woking.

“ A good number of English people were and are being

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attracted towards Islam, and many of them have openly accepted Islam as their religion. Most notable among these is the Irish Peer, Lord Headley, who is a nobleman not only by birth, but also by personal character. Lord Headley is one of the best, if not the best, of the fruits of the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din's Mission. Lord Headley's devotion to the democratic Faith is based upon his knowledge of Islam. It was the same love of Islam which took him in the hottest time of the year to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage, and now service to the cause of Islam seems to be his only occupation. He is the head of the British Muslim Society. He has made long journeys to further the cause of Islam. He knows Christianity well, and that is why his argument against the present-day conceptions of Christianity are very telling. This makes him a very valuable asset to the proselytizing movement.

"The Muslim Mission received great cultural support from the monumental works of the late Mr. Ameer Ali. In recent years he was, in fact, a pivot of almost all Islamic movements in England.

"When considering the success of the Woking Muslim Mission the services rendered by Moulvie Sadr-ud-Din at a very critical time cannot be ignored; Moulvie Muhammad Ali's translation of the Holy Qur-án was printed and published while he was in charge of the Mission.

"Now, the Mission work in England is well established. Thanks to the foresightedness and self-sacrifice of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the finances and administration of both the *Islamic Review* and the Muslim Mission are in the hands of the Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam, which is a registered association. Of course there has never been any question as to the Khwaja's honesty, and the accounts of the Mission have always been published monthly in the *Resala Ishaat-i-Islam*; but with advancing years it was desirable that the control of the finances of the Mission should be placed on some permanent basis. Like a true Muslim, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din did this of his own accord. A Muslim Literary Trust was also organized in 1925, under the chairmanship of Lord Headley, and was registered in England. This Trust controls the Mission's publications in

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England. The literature produced at Woking has succeeded, to a large extent, in removing most of the prevalent misconceptions of Islam. The degradation of women by Christianity and their elevation by Islam have both been set forth; the services rendered by the Last Prophet and the Final Testament to humanity in every walk of life have been made clear on the one hand, and the Pagan sources of the so-called Christianity exposed. There is sufficient literature now to satisfy every person who may desire to find out the truest aspect of Islam."

An Example of a Mistranslation in the Bible and Necessity of a New Revelation.

On January 27, 1929, Mr. A. Majid, M.A., lectured at the Mosque, Woking, on the ways and methods which were adopted by the clergy to extract funds from the people at home. One of the most efficacious methods, he remarked, was to picture to the audience certain social hardships, which being absolutely local had nothing to do with Islam, and under which certain classes of women in the poorer quarters of the Eastern towns are said to labour. He further remarked that the clergy find it convenient to forget the condition of women in the great cities of the West, where they lead lives of drudgery, are generally knocked about by their husbands, and suffer even worse things. Muslims have never held Christianity responsible for this state of affairs, although there are verses of the Bible which might lend support to such an idea. For in St. John ii. 3, Jesus is reported to have said: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"

There was a lady who had come from London to attend the lecture. She thus expressed herself on the words of Jesus:

LONDON, N.W.,
February 4, 1929.

DEAR MR. MAJID,—I have been thinking about your address at the Mosque last Sunday week, and your reference to the words of the Master: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Now Dr. Steiner, in one of his lecture courses on the Gospels, says that this is a mistranslation and that what Jesus said was: "Woman, from thee to me." . . . I

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thought perhaps this explanation would interest you as it naturally gives quite a different meaning to the words uttered on that occasion. . . .

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

H. D.

Both the different translations—i.e. of Dr. Steiner and the Revised Version—it is true to say, are incorrect. “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” is a very erroneous translation of the Greek Text and the clause as rendered in the Pshitta, which is the nearest dialect to the Aramaic language spoken by the Rabbi of Nazareth (for Jesus was a priest and Levite) is, “Atta ma likh u li?”¹ which means, “Woman, what is it to thee and to me?” meaning, “What does it concern thee or me, whether there is or there is no wine?” It is an expression, it may be remarked in passing, which intimates an utter refusal of Jesus to perform a miracle to supply wine for the drunkards. The performance of this miracle at Cana is a fib and is unknown to the Synoptics.

But the question of questions is: How are we to know the exact words uttered by Jesus in his native Syriac dialect, as set forth in the fourth Gospel? One translation can claim to be as authentic as the other. Can the Catholic Church discover those words for us, if she be indeed the dispenser of Jesus’s Revelation?

Dr. Steiner’s translation is not only absurd, but a senseless stupidity; for in this case the Aramaic clause would not be “atta ma likh u li,” but “atta, minikh li.”

The Gospel of Barnabas is silent as to the wedding at Cana of Galilee.

The above only emphasize the necessity of a Revelation which is untainted by human interpolations. The most important question which our Christian friends ought to put to themselves is something like this: If the Bible has not remained in its original purity, and if we have no genuine

¹ We are indebted to our learned contributor, Professor ‘Abdu ‘I-‘Abad Dawud, B.D., for the Aramaic version and its translation.

record of the sacred actions and words of the various prophets and of Jesus, will God leave us for ever without guidance and suffer us to grope in darkness?

For this reason we Muslims believe that if He sent guidance once, He will send it again if the previous Revelation has been tampered with in one way or another. In physical nature, things are replaced when they are vitiated. The same law rules in the spiritual world. We know that no Christian can claim that he has a genuine record of Jesus, this being the main justification for the appearance of Muhammad. Besides, a Muslim does claim that there is a genuine record of Muhammad and the Holy Qur-án.

The Debt of Christianity to Paganism.

A close resemblance between the present-day dogmatized, traditional Church religion and the mysteries that were prevalent long before the advent of Jesus in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean has for a great many years past been an established fact. Alexander Borgia, while Pope, did much to emphasize this. Books have been written, both by Christians and non-Christians, on this important point. Last year there appeared a book under the title of *Paganism in Our Christianity*, by Mr. Arthur Weigall, in which is thus traced the debt of gratitude which Christianity owes to Paganism: "The sacrificial nature of the Crucifixion, the sacramental value of the Passion became astonishingly plain; but this interpretation would not have been so immediately apparent had not there been these prehistoric beliefs to prepare the mind for the revelation. Jesus not only fulfilled the Judaic Scriptures, but He fulfilled those of the Pagan world; and *therein lay the great appeal of early Christianity*." In Him a dozen shadowy gods were condensed into a proximate reality; and in His crucifixion the old stories of their ghastly atoning sufferings and sacrificial deaths were made actual, and were given a direct meaning. It is not to be wondered at, then, that the dark and savage doctrine of the Atonement became

¹ Pages 157, 158.

² Italics are ours.—ED. I.R.

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the central dogma of the New Faith: it is only a matter of astonishment that it is still preached in the twentieth century."

How early Christianity, by assuming a garb, made Jesus play the rôle of combining in himself a dozen shadowy gods of Paganism is thus shown by the author:—

"He was to the Jewish convert the Paschal offering without blemish. And to the Gentile proselytes He was the eternally youthful Adonis killed by the boar who was himself; He was the bull of Mithra killed by the God who was himself; He was Heracles offering himself up in the sacrificial fire; He was Prometheus bound to the rock; He was Attis mutilating his own body; He was the High Priest sacrificing Himself to the God from whom he emanated, for a sin-offering; He was the Son sacrificed by the Father for the redemption of the nations from the avenging demons."

The above excerpts, taken as they are from a book which is essentially a non-Muslim work, would appear to be a strong indictment of the foundations of present-day Christianity. But the cream of the joke, if joke it can decently be called, comes when we learn from the clergy that their one desire is to evangelize the Muslim East. Does it not mean, in other words, that they want us to revert to Paganism?

The Holy Qur-án fourteen hundred years ago proclaimed all these truths which are being slowly recognized by the West in the twentieth century, declaring that false doctrines had been introduced after the death of Jesus, and in chap. v. 116-17, it says:—

"And when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary! did you say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah, he will say: Glory be to Thee, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to say; if I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it; Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Thy mind; surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen things.

"I did not say to them aught save what Thou didst enjoin me with: That serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when

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Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the watcher over them, and Thou art witness of all things."

A comparison of the verdict of the Qur-án with Church teachings and the conclusions of modern research only serve to clinch the truth of the statement that for matters spiritual and religious, man does stand in need of heavenly guidance. Just think—it has taken fourteen hundred years for public opinion in the West to come to the selfsame conclusions as that which the Qur-án reached fourteen hundred years ago!

Islam and Christianity.

Such in brief words is the keynote of the spread of Christianity—a religion which for centuries had hidden itself in byways and corners of the world. Let us now, by way of comparison, study for a moment the causes of the extraordinary rapidity with which the religion of Islam has spread over the surface of the globe. Islam, within thirty years of the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, had found its way into the hearts of millions of people. And before a century was well over, the voice of the Prophet had pealed across three continents. The marvellous success and remarkable effect on the minds of men is an enigma to the Christian world; but it is quite a simple matter to one who has a little patience and an unbiased mind.

Islam does not owe its success to matters of expediency, or to the assistance of edicts and orders of emperors, or to the fact that it appeared as a replica of the teachings of Paganism or idolatry. The success of Islam lies in the world-wide fellowship which it has been able to realize. It lies in the fact that there is no colour-line in Islam, and also in the consistency of the creed from which it grows. A negro may rise to power and place. Contrast this attitude with the Church and estimate the precise amount of Christian brotherhood which may be taken to exist between an Orthodox Greek, a Welsh Wesleyan, an Ethiopian priest, a Scotch Presbyterian, and an Anglican Bishop. Even within the narrow limits of one sect there is nothing like the fellowship one finds in secular societies of Christendom. Which is the stronger appeal, "Anglican

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communicant" or "Freemason"? Again, the success of Islam is due to the fact that a Muslim has one authorized version—if the expression be permitted—of the Holy Qur-án; his Lord's Prayer is contained in the first chapter and is at once short and noble in its terms. Contrast this with the many confusing aspects of Christianity. The success of Islam is due to the fact that there is no organized priesthood in it. Every Muslim considers himself a standard-bearer of truth.

Sir Thomas Arnold, in his book *The Preaching of Islam* (London 1913, page 413), thus sums up the causes of the wonderful and marvellous progress of Islam:—

"Foremost among these is the simplicity of the Muslim creed, There is no God but God; Muhammad is the Apostle of God. Assent to these two simple doctrines is all that is demanded of the convert, and the whole history of Muslim dogmatics fails to present any attempt on the part of ecclesiastical assemblies to force on the mass of believers any symbol couched in more elaborate and complex terms. This simple creed demands no great trial of faith, arouses as a rule no particular intellectual difficulties, and is within the compass of the meanest intelligence. Unencumbered with theological subtleties, it may be expounded by any, even the most unversed in theological expression. The first half of it enunciates a doctrine that is almost universally accepted by men as a necessary postulate, while the second half is based on the theory of man's relationship to God that is almost equally widespread, viz. that at intervals in the world's history God grants some revelation of Himself to men through the mouth-piece of inspired prophets."

NOW READY

TRANSLATION OF THE QURAN (without the Arabic Text). By Maulanā Muhammad 'Alī. Pp. cxvi, 631, octavo size, printed on thin opaque paper, Cloth, 10/-; Flexible binding, 12/-; Postage 5d. extra.

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House—111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 5 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic Classes**—every Sunday at 5.30–7 p.m.

Service, Sermon, and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking at 3.15 p.m. Every Friday at 1 p.m.